



# MADANNA REFORMS OF GOLKONDA KINGDOM

Racha Nageswrrao

Room No 59, Nrs Hostel, Ou Campus, Hyderabad, Ts - 500007.

Abdul Hassan Tana Shah who ascended the throne of Golconda in 1672 April, with the support of Nobles viz., Syed Muzaffar, Mir Jumla of the Qutb Shahi Kingdom. Abul Hassan paid special attention to strengthen the forts in the East coast under the able guidance of Madanna the Prime Minister of Golconda.

## ADMINISTRATION REFORMS:

The Qutb Shahi rule undoubtedly had succeeded to some extent, in giving security to the population by disciplining thieves and dacoits, and by catching and punishing criminals. This continued and considerate rule had taken cognizable shape during the regime of Abdul Hasan Tanashah. Credit of course also goes to Madanna for this benevolent rule.

The Qutb Shahi kingdom was divided into 1. Taraf (province) 2. Smith (circle) 3. Sarkar (District) 4. Paragna (division) 5. Mahal (taluka) and 6. village. Agricultural lands, villages, towns and ports were auctioned annually in favour of the highest bidder. This system of auction was in vogue, from centuries. The successful bidders were given, full possession of the areas for one year, which civil and criminal powers. The chance of getting this area again in the auction for the next year also was slender. Hence the auction winners, used to extract most, by fair and foul means, to amass huge amounts during their tenure of one year. They perhaps believed in the maxima "make hay while the sun shine."

Izaradars were to pay the bid amount, in three installments on the prescribed dates. Default will warrant merciless punishment. Public flogging parading, in chains, trampling by elephants and confiscating of all their properties were a few of the punishments. Most of the Izaradars were Brahmins. Their orders, were unchallengeable in the villages. Public out-cry never reached the royal ear, as the officials around the throne were under the obligation of the izaradars. These Izaradars enjoyed civil and criminal powers. It was also their duty to catch and punish robbers and thieves. As these criminals paid a part of their annual earnings to the Izaradars they were seldom caught and rarely punished. Contemporary histories had given detailed account of the annual auctions during the Qutb Shahi period. A few of them are noted below for illustration.

## Kondaveedu:

The area under this administrative centre was annually auctioned for forty thousand hons. Ports, coastal towns, and commercial centres, were also similarly auctioned year by year.

## Machlipatnam:

The port town of Machli-Bander (Masulipatnam) was used to be auctioned annually for eighty thousand hons. Similarly Nagapattanam and Nizampattanam were also auctioned annually.

Government used to pay five thousand hons, per year to its officers at Machlipatnam and Nagapattanam from the auction proceeds.

This entire scenario changed on Madanna becoming the prime minister. Earlier there was no adherence to the constitution and no adequate security to the life and property of the public. Government's One Point Program me was to keep the royal exchequer full corruption

## VILLAGE REHABILITATION REFORMS:

The policy pursued by Madanna with regard to the village rehabilitation, establishment of new villages and village administration had proved constructive and beneficial. This policy ensured peace and prosperity to the people, security to their lives and property, handsome returns to the government and safety to the state frontiers. Prior to Madanna, whole villages were away to the Mowlaves and to the Pandits, free of tax and cess. There were no returns to the government from them. They were barren cows. The meagre sums here and there that were due to the government from those inamdars, were appropriated by them on one or the other plea. Madanna reviewed this situation and introduced Some changes in the system. He levied small cess on inams, jaggars and aghahars. Further they were resumed in cass misrule, callousness or anti-farmer behaviour by the holder. Such resumed lands were allotted to the cultivator on predetermined land revenue. These steps added to the normal income of the state.

The agricultural lands there were allotted to the farmers on pre-assessed revenue basis. This village, hitherto barren, gave the government an annual income of 1358 varahas (pagodas). Each varaha was equivalent approximately to the then three and half rupees. Koneri Rao was appointed its officer. Gopalapuram village in Jamalamadugu sarkar was a tax free aghaharam before Madanna. He levied on it a revenue of 22 varahas per annum. "Edepadu" village as a free aghaharam given to Shadrasam Somayajuly. Madanna levied some slight tax on it. "Kaifiaths and other historical records also point to such instances liberally.

Village rehabilitation programme, evolved itself into a benevolent administrative, rather into a rural development project, under the kind and unerring eye of Madanna, during the years 1674-1677 gave peace, prosperity and security to the rural population. He concentrated on the improvement of the villages which were reduced to shambles by the negligence of Aghahareeks and the tyrannical behaviour of callous officers. He improved their condition by sagacious approach and determined pursuit. From the year 1677 these two programmes of village rehabilitation and rural development marched together hand in hand as scheduled and achieved perceptible material results. Deserted villages were rehabilitated and new villages were formed. Such villages were again donated to religious institutions and spiritual leaders. Irrigational sources were constructed. Orchards, gardens and parks were laid, roads, were built. Travel was made safe, hospitals for man and beast were opened. People were treated with consideration.

Gundlapadu a deserted village was gifted to Akkavadhani for rehabilitating it and to bring the arable lands under plough. He was authorised to enjoy the treasure-trove and minerals if any found within the village limits. He succeeded in rehabilitating this deserted village under a new name of "Tati-vanam". Madanna rehabilitated Uppaluru a deserted village and appointed Gopala Reddy son of Narasimha Reddy as the hereditary village officer for it. After its rehabilitation, this village gave one thousand varahas to the government as annual income. Similarly Mamillapalli and Malladu (Malluru?) etc., some other deserted villages were rehabilitated. Most of the Kaifiaths, have recorded the names of several villages, rehabilitated and of many newly established villages. Madanna had succeeded to a great extent in his policy of village administration in bringing stability, prosperity peace and security to the rural areas. The monarch along with his prime minister toured the country again for the third time in Dec. 1678 to assess the results of these reforms and the effect of the policy.

Several deserted villages in Koelkunta mahal were rehabilitated by the efforts of Madanna. He had entrusted the lands in these villages of the farmers on nominal land revenue. Narahari Kesavulu was the office of Koilkunta Mahel. Sreenivasa Timmarasu was the administrator of Gandikota paragona of which Koelkunta was a part. These newly rehabilitated villages were gifted to one Hanamadgundatn Krishna Sasthi as aghaharams. Perumalla Reddy was appointed to administer these villages.

Three villages were given as inams to Kanchanapalli Appanna the officer of Jammalamadugu in 1682 in lieu of his good administration. Earlier, these villages were aghaharams, and became deserted due to the bad rule of the Aghahareeks. They were resumed by government and were rehabilitated. Places of worship there were renovated. Raghunath Panthulu was appointed as patwari to administer these three rehabilitated village.

Madanna introduced several far-reaching radical reforms in the administrative set up particularly in the regional and village rule. He transferred several high officers and governors staying at the same place for pretty long periods, to new places. Unnecessary posts were retrenched and salaries of several posts were rationalised.

Most of the volumes of "Kaifiath" reflect the chaotic conditions of those days. They are also full of instances where Madanna and his team of officers were seen rehabilitating deserted villages and establishing new villages. No land revenue was collected for nine years from the newly established villages. Rehabilitated villages were given to cultivators on half the assessed land Revenue. The first two years of Madanna's rule were prominent from the point of village rehabilitation and establishing new villages. He seems to have believed that a peaceful vil-

lage is the basis for the prosperity of the country.

Discussions on rehabilitated and newly established villages are found in most of the "Kaifiaths". Several deserted villages in Jammalamadugu mahal were rehabilitated by Madanna (1) Devigudi (2) Danavulapadu (3) Sugumalapalli and Enumachinthala were prominent among them.

Madanna had created many irrigational sources, to facilitate improved cultivation and enhanced production. Other officers followed his example and contributed to the prosperity of the country in their own way; Sayyad Meera Hussain of Cuddappah paragona, had established a new village Meerapuram on his name and constructed Meerapuram tank. Meer Mohammad Mohasin of Gandikota not only constructed a big tank but also excavated an irrigational canal in accordance with Madanna's desire.

No settled revenue was levied and collected from the land holders, before Madanna's premiership. Moghuls were determined to annex Golconda kingdom. They incited the nobles to revolt, fanned religious frenzy and drained the Golconda royal exchequer. All these fleecing and destabilising measures adopted by the imperial Moghuls, had influenced Madanna in formulating his policies and programmes. He attempted to stave off the Moghul menace and the engulfing bankruptcy by limiting expenditure, by revitalising the administrative set up, and redressing the grievances of the oppressed public, salaries were reduced. Autocracy was disciplined. Inefficient and aged bureaucrats were retired. They became the sworn enemies of Madanna. Moghuls to achieve their imperial goals fanned this hostility. The oligarchy and the bureau crafts thought only of their salary, status and comforts. They had not given any fleeting thought to the acute need for limiting expenditure and activating the administration. They hoarsely shouted the "wolf". They slung mud on Madanna and cast aspersions on the Monarch for their own selfish ends. This attitude adversely effected the strength and prestige of the state.

Madanna provided amenities and means to improve the productivity of the agricultural lands. This effort yielded enhanced income to the treasury. The yearly auctioning of the villages and the ruthless fleecing by the izaradars, forced the farmer to flee the village. Consequently several villages became deserted. In addition to this, many villages were gifted to mullahs and pandits, free of all taxes. Many villages became deserted due to unrestrained plundering of decoits also. These three factors resulted in the fall of annual revenues to the royal exchequer.

The Prime Minister therefore concentrated on improving the village administration on a priority basis. He rehabilitated the deserted villages and settled new ones. He decided not to collect any land revenue from the newly established villages for a period of nine years. After that the land revenue would gradually increase year after year till it reached the levy assessed earlier as per the rules. Government encouraged improved methods of agriculture, to adopt horticulture and to raise orchards. Government also adopted means to ensure reasonable and fair prices for the farm production. The periodical conflicts between the Governor of Karnataka and East India company Madras, for permitting the farmers to sell their farm produce in the open market at Madras for fair price, is a proof positive of Madanna's determination to meet out just treatment to the farming community.

Madanna abolished the practice of annual auction of the villages. He appointed reasonably remunerated officers to run the village administration. He made the jobs hereditary and gave them some agricultural lands in lieu of their services. They ran the administration of the villages with interest and involvement to retain the hereditary and local nature of the jobs. Crimes were reduced to the extent possible.

He constructed large number of tanks, kuntas and canals for irrigational purposes, encouraged agriculture, horticulture and raising of extensive flower beds and fruit gardens, all over the territory.

With a view to augment income to government, Madanna levied and collected land revenue from the religious charitable and endowed lands. These lands were non-revenue yielding and barren hitherto. In case the aghar and jageer administration was unjust in considerate to public welfare, they were resumed by the government. This method gave income from lands which hitherto were nonremunerative. Administration, law and order position of the country also improved. Madanna appointed a Reddy to maintain security, law and order in the village. The country became prosperous and content.

The system of "Bara Belwathandaran" was restructured. Agricultural lands were given to the following balwathandars (village servants and artisans), free of tax and on hereditary basis as remuneration to their services 1. Temple 2. Purohit 3. Pipers and drummers for rendering temple service, 4. Carpenter 5. Kammari (brass artisan) 6. Kummari (potter) 7. Mangali (barber) 8. Chakali (washerman for white washing temples and public building) 9. Dasari (folk-lore singer actor and entertainer) 10. Tambali (flower supplier to temples) 11. Madiga (message and head load carrier from village to village pertaining to the government) 12. Sheikh sanadi a village servants and some others.

Government resumed the Inam of Thiru Vengalayya of Paiki Rajupalem taluka.

Akkanna heard his appeal and ordered to restore the inam. Kanchanapalli Ranga Raghunatha Rao's representative Kanchanapalli Appayya was ruling Jammalamadugu mahal. He gave Gopalapuram as agharam to Appayya on an annual land revenue of 22 varahas under the orders of Madanna.

He worked hard and incessantly to make the kingdom once again prosperous and peace-ful. There was disorder and confusion in Golconda, Karnataka area. This area was known as "Qibla-patti", in government records. The chiefs of this styled as Akasham", Madanna disciplined them and tried to establish peace and order in Qiblapatti.

#### TRADE AND COMMERCE:

Indigenous trade, commerce and industries were encouraged. They were protected from the cut-throat competition from European companies. They were also generally exempted from import and excise duties, Export and excise duties were lowered on other nationals. Four percent of the value of the goods exported or imported was collected as import and export duty from foreign traders, in addition to the eleven percent of the value of the goods as "Stamp Duty". European traders had later obtained permission to pay a lumpsum annually in lieu of the stamp duty.

#### CONCLUSION:

Golconda in containing the Moghals, in arresting the Maratha depredations and in establishing law and order in the Karnataka region of Golconda. To acquire some more adjoining parts of Karnataka without involving its army and inviting the wrath of Aurangzeb. Hence with the royal concurrence Madanna started to explore avenues of concluding a peace, friendship and cooperation treaty with other dynasties.

#### REFERENCES:

1. Micro film Mackenzi and Broun: Collection Uppaluru village Kaifiath, Uppaluru, London, 1931, Vol.7 p.184
2. Microfilm Mackenzi and Broun: Op. cit. Vol. 4, p-462
3. Microfilm Mackenzi and Broun: Collection, Gundlapadu village Kaifiath, Gundlapadu, London, 1931, Vol.36, p. 164-165.
4. Abdul Majeed Siddiqui: Op. Cit., p 259
5. Microfilm Mackenzi and Broun: Collection, Koelkunta village Kaifiath, Vol. 40, p 4
6. Microfilm Mackenzi and Broun: Collection, Gandikota village Kaifiath, Vol. 40, p.181
7. Microfilm Mackenzi and Broun: Collection, Gopalapuram village, Kaifiath, Gopalapuram, London, 1931, Vol. 14, p.310